

is vital to psychical research. The whole subject is one aspect of organism/environment interaction, and psychology is the science of how we interpret our sensory (and extrasensory, if any) data and react appropriately. But in psychology, more than in any other study except medicine, the observer must be keenly aware of his influence on the system observed. Only psychoanalysis gives the observer this kind of profound self-knowledge. Dr Tenhaeff makes this very clear.

John Cutten (*The Future for Psychical Research*) is just as devastatingly sane as Professor Mundle. Firstly, he says, 'It is often argued that with so-called psychical phenomena we cannot get a repeatable experiment . . . yet . . . nature has repeated her own experiments countless times. It is not repetition we look for but repetition to order. There is plenty of repetition of what we cannot yet understand . . .' And again, 'The history of the subject however interesting, is unlikely to lead to any final and irrefutable conclusions concerning any particular experiment . . . the subject must become an acceptable academic study'.

If psychical research is to get any further it must, after 90 years, relinquish its preoccupation with Victoriana and goings-on in darkened séance rooms, and bring to bear the whole armoury of the modern life sciences. In the symposium reviewed, six very competent researchers have shown how this process might be begun.

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BEYOND THE SENSES. A REPORT ON PSYCHICAL RESEARCH IN THE SIXTIES. By Paul Tabori and Phyllis Raphael. Souvenir Press Ltd., London, 1971. 218 pp. £2. GAZETTEER OF BRITISH GHOSTS, AN ILLUSTRATED GUIDE TO 236 HAUNTED SITES. By Peter Underwood. Souvenir Press, London 1971. 256 pp. £2.

*Beyond the Senses* is the first book in a new series entitled *Frontiers of the Unknown* (a not unfamiliar title to me) and it is hardly a promising start. The authors have tried to combine a series of articles for the general public with what purports to be a review of psychical research in the sixties. There are so many gaps in this review that I will not attempt to name them. It is a pity there is no Index.

However, one chapter, 'The end of Rosalie?', is of considerable interest. The Rosalie case was introduced to an astonished world in the late Harry Price's book *Fifty Years of Psychical Research* (London, 1939). Briefly, it tells how Harry Price was invited to a

séance in a house in the suburbs of London where a girl named Rosalie was said to materialise at weekly séances.

The sitters were a Mr and Mrs X, their daughter, who was 'aged nearly seventeen', according to Price, a Frenchwoman, Madame Z, whose child Rosalie had died, aged six, of diphtheria, and 'a cheerful young man' aged about 22.

Price sealed the room before the séance. In due course the 'spirit child' appeared. Price was able to touch the nude body of the girl, feel her pulse and listen to the beating of her heart. He estimated her height to be about 3ft 7ins with the limbs of an average six years old. He was given permission to examine Rosalie's face by the light of a luminous plaque and thought she looked 'rather older than six'.

The case was given scornful treatment by Dr E. J. Dingwall and Mr Trevor H. Hall in *Four Modern Ghosts* (Duckworth, 1958).

One of Price's defenders was the late Mr David H. Cohen, of Manchester, who in his book *Price and his Spirit Child Rosalie* (Regency Press, London) appealed for more information about the séance. As a result he received a letter, written in London and dated April 1966, which purported to come from Rosalie herself, happily now in the land of the living. He sent this letter to Dr Tabori, who is Harry Price's literary executor.

'Rosalie' gave no other clue to her name and no address. She said that she was the daughter of the house at the séance ('aged nearly seventeen' it will be remembered) and that it was she who impersonated the spirit child. At the time she was eleven. A motive is given: her father was under a financial obligation to the Frenchwoman, the séances were held to keep her friendship, and Price was called in to allay her suspicions. If 'Rosalie's' story is true, she was able to undress, impersonate in the nude a child of six, and then dress again in the darkness without arousing Price's suspicions. Not only was she a quickchange artist but she must also have had gifts as a contortionist. When we recall that the address of the house where the séance was held was never published, nor were the names of the sitters, and an explanation of the 'materialisation' is now advanced by a person who gives no name or address (the 'Rosalie' is hardly sufficient) it will be seen that there is not enough evidence here on which to form a firm opinion about the case.

The blurb on the jacket of the *Gazetteer of British Ghosts* says 'it represents the results of a quarter of a century of study and on the spot investigation by one of the leading authorities on haunted houses alive today'. As Mr Underwood is a member of this Society he can be expected to know the critical standards that

should be applied by investigators to reports of hauntings, but seldom in his book is this in evidence.

The grisly—the stuff of legend and folk-lore—is combined with the trivial. What are we to make of an alleged haunting, at Pentcailtland, East Lothian, where (p. 180) 'a bath was filled when nobody turned the tap on or off; a strange piece of soap unaccountably appeared in the bathroom', or as in Capesthorpe Hall, near Macclesfield, Cheshire, the home of Sir Walter Bromley-Davenport (p. 160), 'Another Member of Parliament spent a restless night in a bedroom where the door kept opening and then banging shut for no apparent reason'.

We have all lived or stayed in houses where odd bits of soap are left in bathrooms or where the doors won't stay shut without ascribing all this to ghosts. Two examples of Mr Underwood's standard of assessment of cases may be given. About Borley Rectory he says 'the haunting remains as baffling and as fascinating as any in the annals of psychical research. Certainly there exists more evidence for this haunting than for any other alleged haunted house anywhere in the world'. The haunting of 'Garden Reach' in Pittville Circus Road, Cheltenham, in the 1880's, investigated by F. W. H. Myers and the subject of a very full paper by Dr Rosina C. Despard in *Proc. S.P.R.* VIII, is not even mentioned.

Even if this book is judged on the level of a list of sites to which picturesque stories attach, it does not give the same geographical coverage, being weak for the northern counties, as the section on ghosts in vol. II of *A Dictionary of British Folk-Tales and Folk Legends* by Dr Katharine M. Briggs (Routledge, 1971, £16 for two volumes). In addition, Dr Briggs, who is past president of the Folk-Lore Society, gives the source of the narratives from which the stories in her book were taken and footnotes and cross references which are of value to the student of psychical research.

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THE EVIL EYE: THE ORIGINS AND PRACTICES OF SUPERSTITION. By Frederick Thomas Elworthy. With an Introduction by Louis S. Barron. Paper Edition. Collier MacMillan Ltd. Toronto. 1970. XV. 471 pp. Originally published in Great Britain by John Murray, London in 1895. This edition first published in America in 1953 by the Julian Press, Inc. New York. Reprinted by arrangement with Collier Books, U.S.A. in 1970.

The power of the eye to cast a malignant spell is the oldest, most widespread superstition. It was believed in ancient Egypt